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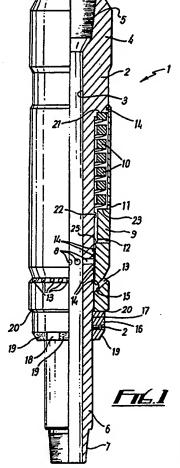
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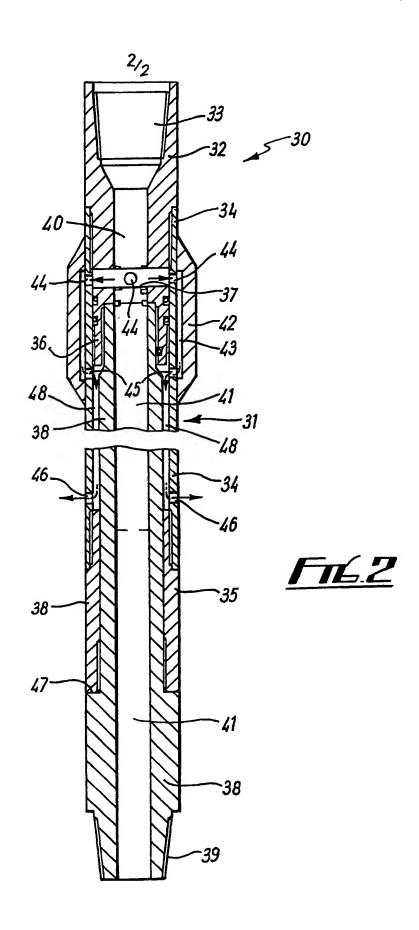
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## (54) Apparatus for circulating fluid

(57) Apparatus (1) for circulating fluid in a borehole comprises a body member (2) having a fluid outlet (8). An isolation sleeve (9) is movably mounted on the body member (2) for movement between an open position in which fluid may flow out of the outlet (8) and a closed position. The isolation sleeve (9) is moved to its open position against the action of spring 10 by engaging shoulder 20 with the top of the lining and setting down on the tubing string. In a second embodiment (not shown) the outlet is opened when the lower end of the tubing string engages the bottom of the borehole.



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1 "Apparatus for Circulating Fluid" 2 The invention relates to apparatus for circulating 3 fluid and in particular, apparatus for circulating 4 fluid in a borehole. 5 6 7 It is common practice to install liners within a borehole which has been drilled and after installation 8 of the liners it is generally necessary to clean out 9 the inside of the liner to wash away any debris or . 10 other contaminants. 11 12 Generally, the liner is in the form of a cylindrical 13 • 14 tube which has a relatively small internal diameter compared with the diameter of casing lining the 15 borehole immediately above the liner. To effectively 16 clean out inside the liner, high flow rates are 17 generally required to create turbulence to aid the 18 19 cleaning out process. Generally, the clean out procedure is carried out by first passing cleaning 20 liquid through the drill string to the lower end of the 21 22 liner at a high flow rate so that the cleaning fluid flows turbulently up the annulus between the inside of 23 the liner and the outside of the drill-pipe and then 24 into the casing above the liner. 25 26

1 However, because of the difference in volume between 2 the liner and the casing above the liner, after the cleaning fluid passes the top of the liner and enters 3 4 the relatively large volume of the casing, the flow 5 rate of the cleaning fluid in the casing above the liner is greatly reduced and any cleaning action 6 7 becomes negligible. 8 9 Hence, it is generally necessary after passing cleaning 10 fluid through the liner to then pass further cleaning 11 fluid from the drill-pipe into the casing at a location 12 above or adjacent the top edge of the liner, so that a 13 high flow rate and hence turbulence of the cleaning 14 fluid can be obtained in the casing. Therefore it is 15 generally necessary to have some device at or adjacent 16 to the top end of the liner which can be operated 17 downhole to either circulate fluid through the length 18 of the drill string to the lower end of the liner or 19 which can direct cleaning fluid at high flow rates out 20 of the drill string into the casing above the liner, at 21 or adjacent the top edge of the liner. 22 Once such device that is known for carrying out this 23 24 operation comprises a hollow body member and in order 25 to change the direction of flow between the bottom of 26 the liner and the top edge of the liner, spherical 27 balls are dropped down the drill-string to open or close valves in the device. 28 29 30 However, there are a number of disadvantages associated with this apparatus. In particular, the length of time 31 32 associated with the spherical balls falling from the surface to the device through a drill-string which is ... 33 34 perhaps a few thousand feet in length can take 25 to 30

minutes. Hence, there is a problem with co-ordinating

the arrival of the spherical ball at the apparatus to 1 coincide with the arrival of the required cleaning 2 fluid at the apparatus. It is also necessary to ensure 3 that the increasing and decreasing flow rates 4 5 associated with the liner and the casing clean out are co-ordinated with the arrival of the spherical ball at 6 7 the apparatus. 8 9 In addition, it is generally necessary to repeat the 10 cleaning out of the liner and the casing a number of 11 times with different cleaning fluids until a situation is obtained in which the last clean out is carried out 12 with sea water. Hence, it is necessary to be able to 13 repeatedly operate the apparatus to divert flow between 14 the lower end and upper end of the liner a number of 15 With the apparatus described above there is the 16 disadvantage that the apparatus is designed so that 17 each spherical ball that is dropped down the drill-18 string changes the direction of clean-out liquid flow 19 either from the lower end of the liner to the upper end 20 or from the upper end of the liner to the lower end of 21 22 the liner. Hence, the number of times which this apparatus can be used to cycle fluid between the lower 23 and upper ends of the liner is limited by the design of 24 25 the device and when the spherical balls have been used or the tool is full with spherical balls and cannot be 26 cyclically operated further, it is necessary to extract 27 28 the drill-string from the borehole in order to recover the device and remove the spherical balls from the 29 30 device. 31 In addition, there is also the danger that the 32 spherical balls may not properly engage with the device 33 34 and the risk that the device will not operate 35 correctly.

1 In accordance with the present invention, there is 2 provided apparatus for circulating fluid in a borehole, 3 the apparatus having a fluid inlet and a first fluid outlet, the first fluid outlet communicating with the 4 fluid inlet for throughflow of fluid through the 5 apparatus, and the apparatus including:-6 7 a body member having a second fluid outlet; 8 an isolation means movably mounted on the body 9 member for movement between an open position in which 10 fluid introduced into the apparatus through the fluid 11 inlet may flow out of the second outlet, and a closed 12 position in which fluid is substantially prevented from 13 flowing out of the second outlet; and 14 actuating means connected with one of the body 15 member or the isolation means for coupling to a 16 formation in the borehole to provide resistance to 17 movement of the actuating means with respect to the 18 formation, whereby movement of the other of the body 19 member or the isolation means relative to the formation 20 causes relative movement between the isolation means 21 and the body member to move the isolation means between 22 its open and closed positions. 23 An advantage of the invention is that by providing an 24 25 isolation means which is movable between a closed position and an open position and an actuating means 26 27 which may be coupled to a formation in the borehole, 28 circulation of fluid can be redirected by movement of 29 one of the body member or isolation means relative to the formation. . 30 31 32 Typically, the formation may be a shoulder portion in 33 the borehole. Alternatively, the formation may be the

bottom of the borehole, in which case the actuating 35 means may be coupled to the formation by a string, such

as a drill string, on which the apparatus is run into 1 2 the hole. 3 4 The apparatus may further include biasing means to bias 5 the isolation means to the closed or open position. Typically, the biasing means is mounted on the body 6 7 member. In the preferred example of the invention, the 8 isolation means is biased to the closed position by the 9 biasing means. 10 11 In one example of the invention, the isolation means prevents fluid passing through the second outlet by 12 13 obturating the second outlet and typically, the 14 isolation means could comprise a sleeve mounted on the 15 body member. The isolation means may be mounted on the outside surface of the body member or on an inside 16 surface of the body member. 17 18 In another example of the invention, the body member 19 may include a by-pass channel and in the closed 20 21 position the isolation means obturates the entrance and/or exit to the by-pass channel or the second 22 outlet, while in the open position fluid may by-pass 23 24 the isolation means by passing through the by-pass 25 channel to reach the second outlet. 26 27 Preferably, the second outlet may comprise a number of apertures in the body member which communicate with the 28 inlet and typically, the apertures may be distributed 29 30 circumferentially around the outer surface of the body member. 31 32 33 Preferably, the fluid inlet and the first outlet are 34 defined by a longitudinal throughbore in the body

member and typically, the second outlet is defined by

at least one transverse bore extending from the

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throughbore to the outer surface of the body member. 2 3 Typically, the cross-sectional area of the second 4 outlet is greater than the cross-sectional area of the 5 6 first outlet. 7 8 Preferably, where the isolation means comprises a 9 sleeve, the sleeve has a number of apertures therein which communicate with the second outlet when the 10 11 isolation means is in the open position. 12 13 Preferably, the second outlet is designed to 14 communicate with the apertures in the sleeve 15 irrespective of the circumferential orientation of the sleeve with respect to the second outlet. Typically, 16 this may be provided by a circumferentially extending 17 18 groove on the outer surface of the body member which 19 communicates with the second outlet and is aligned with 20 the apertures in the sleeve when the isolation means is 21 in the open position. Alternatively, this could be designed by providing a circumferentially extending 22 groove on the inside of the sleeve which communicates 23 with the apertures in the sleeve and aligns with the 24 second outlet when the isolation means is in the open 25 position. ' 26 27 28 Typically, movement of one of the body member or the 29 isolation means towards the bottom of the borehole when the actuating means is coupled to the formation causes 30 movement of the isolation means from the closed to the 31 32 open position. 33 34 Typically, the actuating means may comprise a shoulder

which contacts a shoulder portion in the borehole.

Preferably, the shoulder portion in the borehole may be 1 provided by the upper edge of a liner installed in the 2 3 borehole. 4 Preferably, a shoulder on the isolation means may have 5 the surface which contacts the shoulder in the borehole 6 7 and may have hard facing applied to it. The advantage of applying hard facing in this manner is that if the 8 top edge of the liner has been damaged accidentally by 9 running tools in and out of the liner, the hard facing 10 can be used to redress the upper edge of the liner to 11 12 ensure that the actuating means correctly engages with the top edge of the liner. Typically the hard facing 13 14 could comprise tungsten carbide. 15 Preferably, the cross-sectional area of the second 16 outlet in the body member is greater than the total 17 cross-sectional area of the apertures in the sleeve. 18 This has the advantage that wear of the apertures in 19 the sleeve is more likely to occur than wear of the 20 second outlet and, hence the life of the body member is 21 22 increased. 23 24 Preferably, the apertures in the sleeve are designed to direct the fluid exiting the second outlet in an 25 upwards direction into the casing. 26 27 Two examples of apparatus for circulating fluid in a 28 29 borehole in accordance with the invention will now be 30 described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-31 32 33 Fig. 1 is a partial cross-sectional view through a first example of a circulating tool; and 34 Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view through a second 35

example of a circulating tool. 1 2 Fig. 1 shows a circulation tool 1 which comprises a 3 4 body member 2 which has a throughbore 3 with a diameter of approximately 2.7". End 4 of the body member 2 has 5 6 a female threaded coupling 5 and end 6 of the body member 2 has a male threaded coupling 7. 7 central section of the body member are located twelve 8 circumferentially distributed holes 8 and each hole has 9 10 a diameter of 5/8" which gives a total cross-sectional 11 area for the twelve holes 8 of approximately 3.68 12 square inches. 13 14 Slidably mounted on the outside surface of the body member 2 is a sleeve 9 which is biased against the body 15 16 member 2 by means of a helical spring 10. Located in 17 the sleeve 9 are two vent holes 11, 12 which permit the 18 equalisation of pressures outside the sleeve 9 with pressures between the sleeve 9 and body member 2 in 19 20 order to permit movement of the sleeve 9 relative to 21 the body member 2. Also located in the sleeve 9 are 22 eighteen circulating ports 13. The circulating ports 23 13 each have a ½" diameter and therefore have a total 24 cross-sectional area of approximately 3.53 square 25 inches. Also mounted on the body member 2 to engage the sleeve 9 are five 0-ring seals 14 which sealingly 26 27 engage with the sleeve 9. On the inside of sleeve 9 adjacent the circulating ports 13 is an internal groove 28 29 15 formed in the inner surface of the sleeve 9. 30 31 Below the sleeve 9 is a spring tensioner ring 16 which is threadedly engaged with the body member 2 through a 32 33 thread formation 17. A set screw 18 is provided to 34 lock the spring tensioner 16 in position on the body

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member 2.

The spring tensioner ring 16 has an angled shoulder 19 1 to which hard facing in the form of tungsten carbide 2 hard facing 20 is applied in four equally spaced 3 circumferential locations on the shoulder 19. At the lower end of the sleeve 9, adjacent the spring 5 tensioner ring 16, an actuating shoulder 21 is 6 7 provided. 8 For assembly of the tool 1, the helical spring 10, 9 10 which in this example has a length of 10½ inches and a 11 spring rating of 1,680 lbs per inch, is slid onto the body member 2 over the end 6 and located between 12 13 shoulder 21 and lug 22 on the body member 2. O-rings 14 are located in their respective grooves and 14 the sleeve 9 is then slid onto the body member 2, until 15 shoulder 23 on the sleeve abuts against the lower end 16 The spring tensioner ring 16 is then of the spring 10. 17 slid over the end 6 of the body member 2 and the thread 18 formations 17 engaged. The spring tensioner ring 16 is 19 then screwed up to the lower end of the sleeve 9 and 20 tightened to compress the spring 10 and move the spring 21 and sleeve 9 to the position shown in Fig. 1. 22 example shown, this will give a tension of 23 approximately 1,500 lbs in the spring 10 when the 24 25 apparatus is in the position shown in Fig. 1. 26 In operation, the tool 1 is connected via the male 27 connector 7 to the upper end of a drill-string and 28 further lengths of drill-pipe are connected to the 29 30 upper end 4 of the tool 1 using the female connector 5. The drill-string and tool 1 are lowered into a borehole 31 until the spring tensioner ring 16 enters the upper end 32 33 of a liner in the borehole and shoulder 20 on the sleeve 9 rests against the upper edge of the liner. 34 35

If the upper edge of the liner in the borehole has been 1 2 damaged and the spring tensioner ring will not enter 3 the liner, then the hard facing 19 on the shoulder 18 4 of the spring tensioner ring 16 will contact the 5 damaged sections of the liner and rotation of the 6 drill-string will cause rotation of the spring 7 tensioner ring 16 to redress the upper edge of the 8 liner by the abrasive action of the hard facing 19 on 9 the upper edge of the liner. 10 11 The tension of the spring 10 when the sleeve 9 is in 12 the position shown in Fig. 1 is such that the shoulder 13 20 can contact the upper edge of the liner without 14 causing compression of the helical spring 10 and 15 movement of the sleeve 9 upwards. Hence, initially the 16 tool when the shoulder 20 contacts the upper edge of 17 the liner remains in the position shown in Fig. 1. 18 19 In this position, the holes 8 in the body member 2 are 20 obturated by the sleeve 9 and fluid can be pumped 21 through the bore 3 in the tool 1 via the drill-string 22 to exit the tool 1 through the end 6 into the drill-23 string below. Hence, fluid is pumped down the drill-24 string to the lower end of the liner to clean out the 25 liner below the tool 1. 26 27 After the liner has been cleaned out, sufficient load 28 is applied to the body member of the tool 1 to overcome 29 the tension in the helical spring 10 and to cause 30 movement of the body member 2 into the liner while the 31 sleeve 9 rests on the upper edge of the liner. Travel 32 of the sleeve 9 on the outside surface of the body 33 member 2 is limited by shoulder 25 on the sleeve 9 34 which abuts against the lug 22 on the body member. 35 This helps prevent the spring 10 becoming spring bound.

When the shoulder 25 abuts against the lug 22 the 1 groove 15 is adjacent the holes 8 in the body member 2 2 so that the holes 8 communicate with the circulating 3 4 ports 13. 5 When the sleeve is in this second open position, fluid 6 is free to pass from the throughbore 3 of the body 7 member 2 and out through the holes 8 and circulating 8 ports 13 into the casing without entering the liner. 9 10 The upward facing direction of the circulating ports 13 helps to reduce the possibility of any damage occurring 11 to the casing due to the fluid exiting the circulating 12 13 ports 13 horizontally. 14 The advantage of the groove 15 is that irrespective of 15 16 the orientation of the circulating ports 13 relative to the holes 8, fluid will pass through the holes 8 and 17 out of the circulating ports 13 via the groove 15. 18 19 Furthermore it will be noted that the total cross-20 sectional area of the circulating ports 13 is less than 21 22 the total cross-sectional area of the holes 8. any wear due to fluid flow is more likely to occur on 23 the circulating ports 13 which will only require 24 25 replacement of the sleeve 9. As the sleeve 9 is less costly than the body member 2 this gives a cost 26 27 efficient design. 28 In order to start circulating fluid to the bottom of 29 the liner again, the holes 8 can be obturated by 30 reducing the load on the body member 2 of the tool 1 so 31 32 that the tool 1 reverts to the position shown in Fig. 1 33 and fluid can be circulated through the drill-string to 34 the lower end of the liner for cleaning out the liner 35 again.

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In addition, a pressure operated valve could be coupled
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     to the lower end 6 of the body member to positively
2
      isolate the lower length of drill-string from the
 3
 4
     through bore 3. As the flow rates of fluid will be
 5
     higher when cleaning out the casing, such a valve could
 6
      be designed to close above a given threshold pressure
 7
      and open when pressure falls below this threshold.
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 9
      Fig. 2 shows a second example of a circulating tool 30
10
      which comprises a body member 31. The body member 31
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      comprises a top sub 32 having a female threaded end 33.
12
      Threadedly engaged with the lower end of the top sub 32
13
      is a main sub 34 and threadedly engaged with the lower
14
      end of the main sub 34 is a bottom sub 35.
15
      mounted within the central sub 34 is a piston assembly
      36 which has a throughbore 37 in its upper end.
16
      Threadedly connected to the piston assembly 36 is the
17
      upper end of an inner mandrel 38. The lower end of the
18
19
      mandrel 38 protrudes from the end of the bottom sub 35
20
      and the lowermost end of the mandrel 38 has a male
21
      threaded connection 39. The top sub 32 has a
22
      throughbore 40 which communicates with the throughbore
23
      37 in the piston assembly 36 and a throughbore 41 in
24
      the mandrel 38.
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      As shown in Fig. 2, the main sub 34 has a channel
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27
      member 42 located on its outer surface and which
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      defines a channel 43 which extends from ports 44 in the
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      side wall of the main sub 34 to ports 45 also in the
30
      side wall of the main sub 34. Located further down the
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      main sub 34 are outlet ports 46 in the lower end of the
32
      main sub 34.
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      In use, the tool 30 is coupled into a drill string at
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the appropriate depth and may also have a pressure

operated valve coupled to the connection 39 of the 1 2 mandrel 38. 3 In order to pump fluid through the tool 30 to exit 4 through the bore 41 in the mandrel 38, the drill string 5 above the top sub 32 is lifted and the weight of the 6 drill string below the mandrel 38 causes the piston 7 assembly 36 and the inner mandrel 38 to stay stationary 8 9 with respect to the borehole and the body member 31 moves upwards until the top end of the bottom sub 35 10 abuts the lower end of the piston assembly 36. 11 position the outlet ports 46 are obturated and fluid 12 within the tool 30 is prevented from exiting through 13 the ports 46 so that fluid pumped into the tool 30 must 14 pass through the bore 41 and into the drill string 15 below the tool, 30 to the lower end of the liner to 16 clean out the liner below the tool 30. 17 18 After the liner has been cleaned out, the drill string 19 above the tool 30 can be lowered causing the body 20 member 31 to move relative to the piston assembly 36 21 and mandrel 38 until the lower end of the bottom sub 35 22 rests against shoulder 47 on the mandrel 38, so that 23 the tool 30 is in the position shown in Fig. 2. 24 this position, fluid pumped into the tool 30 may by-25 pass the piston assembly 36 by means of the ports 44, 26 45 and the channel 43 to enter an annulus 48 between 27 the main sub 34 and the mandrel 38. Hence, fluid may 28 pass out of the outlet ports 46 to the casing without 29 30 entering the liner. 31 The advantage of tool 30 shown in Fig. 2 is that it 32 does not require a shoulder on the top of the liner in 33 order to actuate the tool, as the tool may be actuated 34

by resting the end of the drill string on the bottom of

1 the borehole and increasing or decreasing the tension appropriately in order to move the body member 31 up or 2 3 down with respect to the piston assembly 36 and the mandrel 38. However, it would also be possible to use 4 5 the tool 30 in combination with a shoulder in the borehole, such as the top of a liner by connecting a 6 7 tool with a shoulder, such as the spring tensioner ring 16 shown in Fig. 1, around the mandrel 38. 8 9 10 Hence, the invention has the advantages of permitting 11 circulation of fluids to separate regions in a borehole 12 by increasing or decreasing the load exerted on the 13 tools 1, 30 in the borehole. Hence, the tools 1, 30 have the advantage of operating when the load is 14 15 increased or decreased without any effective time delay 16 and also have the advantage that they facilitate 17 circulation of the fluid between the two regions 18 repeatedly without any limitation on the number of 19 times recirculation can be achieved. 20 21 Modifications and improvements may be incorporated 22 without departing from the scope of the invention. 23

## 1 <u>CLAIMS</u>

1. Apparatus for circulating fluid in a borehole, the apparatus having a fluid inlet and a first fluid outlet, the first fluid outlet communicating with the fluid inlet for throughflow of fluid through the apparatus, and the apparatus including:-

a body member having a second fluid outlet;

an isolation means movably mounted on the body member for movement between an open position in which fluid introduced into the apparatus through the fluid inlet may flow out of the second outlet, and a closed position in which fluid is substantially prevented from flowing out of the second outlet; and

actuating means connected with one of the body member or the isolation means for coupling to a formation in the borehole to provide resistance to movement of the actuating means with respect to the formation, whereby movement of the other of the body member or the isolation means relative to the formation causes relative movement between the isolation means and the body member to move the isolation means between its open and closed positions.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the actuating means comprises a shoulder which engages a shoulder portion in the borehole.

3. Apparatus according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the isolation means obturates the second outlet when in the closed position.

33 4. Apparatus according to any of the preceding 34 claims, wherein the body member includes a channel 35 which extends across the isolation means when the

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isolation means is in the open position. 1 2 Apparatus according to any of the preceding 3 claims, wherein the fluid inlet and the first outlet 4 are co-axial and the second outlet is transverse to the 5 fluid inlet and the first outlet. 6 7 Apparatus according to any of the preceding 8 claims, wherein the cross-sectional area of the second 9 outlet is greater than the cross-sectional area of the 10 first outlet. 11 12 Apparatus according to any of the preceding 13 claims, wherein the isolation means comprises a sleeve. 14 15 Apparatus according to any of the preceding 16 claims, wherein movement of one of the body member and 17 the isolation means towards the bottom of the borehole, 18 with the actuating means coupled to the formation moves 19 20 the isolation means from the closed to the open 21 position. 22 Apparatus according to any of the preceding 23 9. claims, wherein the actuating means is connected with 24 the isolation means and movement of the body member 25 relative to the formation causes movement of the 26 isolation means between the open and closed positions. 27

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10. Apparatus for circulating fluid in a borehole, substantially as hereinbefore defined with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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P 'ents Act 1977 Laminer's report to the Comptroller under Section 17 (The Search report)	Application number GB 9323599.2
Relevant Technical Fields	Search Examiner D J HARRISON
(i) UK Cl (Ed.M) Elf (FGL, FLJ, FLP)	
(ii) Int Cl (Ed.5) E21B	Date of completion of Search 16 FEBRUARY 1994
Databases (see below) (i) UK Patent Office collections of GB, EP, WO and US patent specifications.  (ii)	Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of Claims:- 1 TO 10

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A:	Document indicating technological background and/or state		earlier than, the filing date of the present application.

of the art.	_		&:	Member of the same patent family; corresponding document
of the art.			&:	Member of the same patent family; corresponding documer

Category	I	Relevant to claim(s)	
X	GB 545271 A	(CUTHILL & OIL WELL ENGINEERING CO) - whole document, but see particularly page 3 lines 73-94	1, 3, 5, 7, 9
X	US 4637471 A	(SODERBERG) - whole document	1, 5, 6, 9
X	US 4315542 A	(DOCKINS Jr) - whole document	1, 3, 5, 7, 9
X	US 3907046 A	(GAYLORD) - whole document, but see particularly column 4 lines 15-30	1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9

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